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Draft Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load

Comment On: EPA-R03-OW-2010-0736-0001

Clean Water Act Section 303(d): Notice for the Public Review of the Draft Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the Chesapeake Bay

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Anonymous public comment

Submitter Information

General Comment

I am deeply concerned by the sloppy and mean-spirited approach taken by EPA to develop this TMDL. I am particularly concerned by the way EPA has blamed the poor condition of the Bay on the States without mentioning the EPA's significant role in the problem (see section of Washington Post article below). EPA should acknowledge in the TMDL that they provided the states with poor data for years to protect the EPA's budget.

Here is the excerpt from the Washington Post article mentioned above:

Broken Promises on the Bay

Chesapeake Progress Reports Painted 'Too Rosy a Picture' As Pollution Reduction Deadlines Passed
Unmet

By David A. Fahrenthold

Washington Post Staff Writer

Saturday, December 27, 2008; A01

But the agencies charged with the cleanup have never mustered enough legal muscle or political will to overcome opposition from the agricultural and fishing industries and other interests. Instead of strengthening their tactics, though, they tried to make the cleanup effort look less hopeless than it was.

That picture emerges from internal documents and from interviews with current and former officials involved in the cleanup, including two who served as director of the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program Office, the closest thing to a "bay czar" that the decentralized effort has. William Matuszeski, who headed the program from 1991 to 2001, described how the program repeatedly released data that exaggerated its success, hoping to influence Congress. His successor, Rebecca W. Hanmer, said she was instructed by regional leaders in 2002 not to acknowledge that the effort would fall short of its 2010 goals. "To protect appropriations you were getting, you had to show progress," Matuszeski said. "So I think we had to overstate our progress." Several state governors said they were unaware of inflated data, and another EPA official disputed Matuszeski's account.